

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of accessing memory-stored items that are available via a  
2 system comprising the steps of:  
3 displaying a stack of partially overlapping images that are  
4 directly representative of display information of a plurality of said memory-  
5 stored items, including presenting only a portion of said display information for  
6 each said image that is overlapped by another said image in said displayed  
7 stack;  
8 automatically tracking movement of a display icon across said  
9 displayed stack; and  
10 revealing an increased portion of each said images in response  
11 to detecting that said display icon is positioned in alignment with said image,  
12 said revealing being triggered independently from user-initiated designations  
13 other than said movement of said display icon, thereby enabling sequential  
14 presentations of said images as an automated response to scanning said  
15 display icon across said displayed stack along a path in which said display  
16 icon is moved into sequential alignment with said images.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of displaying said displayed stack  
2 includes presenting only a minor portion of each image, with an exception of a  
3 foremost image in said displayed stack, said memory-stored items being  
4 image documents.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein said images in said displayed stack are a  
2 subset of available images in storage, said method further comprising the  
3 steps of:

4 presenting an incrementing icon and a decrementing icon;  
5 enabling subset-to-subset incrementing forward within said  
6 storage of images in response to detecting that said display icon has been in  
7 alignment with said incrementing icon for a set period of time; and

8 enabling subset-to-subset decrementing rearward within said  
9 storage of images in response to detecting that said display icon has been in  
10 alignment with said decrementing icon for said set period of time;

11 wherein said subset-to-subset incrementing and decrementing  
12 triggers displays of different stacks of said available images in said storage.

1 4. The method of claim 3 further comprising a step of scrolling through each  
2 said image in said displayed stack during said set period of time, including  
3 revealing each said image in entirety during said set period of time before a  
4 different stack is displayed.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein said steps of displaying and revealing are  
2 directed to a first window area of a display screen, said method further com-  
3 prising opening a specific memory-stored item in response to a selection of a  
4 specific image in said displayed stack, said specific memory-stored item being  
5 directly related to said specific image, said opening of said specific memory-  
6 stored item occurring in a second window area of said display screen.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein said step of displaying said stack of  
2 images includes presenting thumbnail images from video files and wherein  
3 said step of opening said specific memory-stored item includes running a  
4 specific video file when a directly related thumbnail image is selected.

1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of revealing increased portions of  
2 said images includes generating pop-up images above said stack as said  
3 display icon is moved into alignment with said images in said displayed stack.

1 8. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of presenting file informa-  
2 tion regarding said memory-stored items, said file information presentations  
3 being implemented in correspondence with said revealing of said increased  
4 portions of said images.

1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein said steps of displaying, tracking and  
2 revealing are implemented from a web page of the World Wide Web.

1 10. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of enabling manipulation  
2 of file storage and transfer in response to user-initiated designations directed  
3 toward said displayed stack.

1 11. A computer system comprising:

2 a display device;

3 a source of image files;

4 at least one processor enabled to manipulate said image files  
5 from said source for visual presentation at said display device;

6 a cursor-control device and an operatively associated driver  
7 program accessible by said at least one processor to manipulate movement  
8 of a cursor along said display device; and

9 computer programming accessible by said at least one  
10 processor to provide instructions for manipulating said image files from said  
11 source, said computer programming being cooperative with said at least one  
12 processor to:

13 generate a display of a stack of said image files at said  
14 display device such that said stack includes overlapping representa-  
15 tions of a plurality of associated said image files from said source, and  
16 respond directly to alignment of said cursor with said  
17 display of said stack by generating a user-selected image of a repre-  
18 sentation on which said cursor resides, said user-selected image being  
19 misaligned with respect to said representations in said stack and being  
20 a display of the specific image file associated with said representation  
21 on which said cursor resides.

1 12. The computer system of claim 11 wherein said source of images is a  
2 stored library of digital photographs.

1 13. The computer system of claim 11 wherein said cursor-control device is  
2 one of a computer mouse and a trackball device.

1 14. The computer system of claim 11 wherein said computer programming  
2 includes a cursor-detection module that is sensitive to positioning of said  
3 cursor to generate said user-selected image based merely on said positioning  
4 of said cursor and further includes an image-loading module that initiates an  
5 opening of said specific image file associated with said representation in  
6 response to a second user-initiated designation that is triggered by operation  
7 of said cursor-control device, wherein said opening is executed separately  
8 from said generation of said user-selected image.

1 15. The computer system of claim 14 wherein said computer programming  
2 further includes a stack-incrementing module that is responsive to said  
3 positioning of said cursor (a) to sequentially scroll through said representa-  
4 tions in said stack with respect to generating a sequence of said user-  
5 selected images and (b) to generate a succession of said stacks in which  
6 each subsequent stack is presented following said sequential scrolling  
7 through said representations in an immediately preceding stack.

1 16. A method of accessing stored image files comprising the steps of:  
2 displaying an arrangement of images in which regions of rear-  
3 ward images are partially covered by forward images, said images in said  
4 arrangement being first-level images that correspond to said image files;  
5 displaying a second-level image each time that a user-  
6 manipulated indicator is positioned in perceived contact with an exposed  
7 region of a first-level image, said displayed second-level image being at least  
8 partially offset from said arrangement and having a direct correspondence  
9 with the first-level image with which said user-manipulated indicator is in  
10 perceived contact; and  
11 displaying a third-level image each time that a second-level  
12 image is selected, including opening the stored image file that corresponds to  
13 said second-level image which is selected.

1 17. The method of claim 16 wherein said first-level images, said second-level  
2 image and said third-level image are displayed simultaneously on a computer  
3 screen.

1 18. The method of claim 16 wherein said step of displaying said arrangement  
2 includes forming a stack of axially aligned overlapping first-level images, said  
3 step of displaying said second-level image including exposing an entirety of  
4 said first-level image at a position adjacent to said stack and within a same  
5 window as said stack.

1 19. The method of claim 16 further comprising a step of presenting file  
2 information regarding the corresponding image file for each second-level  
3 image that is displayed.